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National Pollinator Week: New Buzz About the Birds and the Bees

San Francisco, CA (June 13) Recent news reports of widespread honey bee deaths have raised the public's awareness of the importance of bees just as a campaign to protect all pollinators kicks off in June. No less than the health and safety of our food and ecosystems are at stake.

According to a proclamation by Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns and a unanimous vote by the U.S. Senate, the first annual National Pollinator Week will be held June 24-30 to promote awareness of the importance of bees, birds, bats, butterflies, beetles, and other pollinators. The event is being heralded across the U.S. and is coordinated by the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), a partnership among 120+ organizations in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico including members as varied as the National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. Golf Association, and the Aveda Corporation.

In Washington D.C., National Pollinator Week events will include the U.S. Postal Service's First Day of Issuance celebration of a series of four commemorative stamps entitled *Pollination* on June 29. The stamps, which portray pollinators with their corresponding native plants, will be released in a ceremony featuring U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns.

Also in Washington, Pulitzer-prize-winning scientist and pollination expert E.O. Wilson will speak about the importance of pollinators in maintaining healthy ecosystems and biodiversity at an evening reception on June 27 as well as at a seminar at the Kaiser Family Foundation.

At the legislative level, pollinator conservation advocates in the U.S. Senate are working to pass the Pollinator Habitat Protection Act, which would assure that language promoting pollinator conservation is included in the Farm Bill, and a pollinator research bill, as well. The House Natural Resources Committee plans an oversight hearing to understand the role of pollinators in public lands.

Among several dozen Pollinator Week events planned nationwide is the Pollinator Crop Art Installation being created on a family farm near Lawrence, Kansas by noted artist, Stan Herd. Using entirely natural materials, Herd is creating a half-acre replica of the U.S.P.S. Dogface butterfly *Pollination* stamp.

National Pollinator Week is a project of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) and the Pollinator Partnership, which are managed by the non-profit Coevolution Institute (CoE). To join or to learn more, visit www.pollinator.org.

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